

THE COMPASSION OF JESUS NO. 3438

A SERMON
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“He was moved with compassion.”
Matthew 9:36

THIS is said of Christ Jesus several times in the New Testament. The original word is a very remarkable one. It is not found in classic Greek. It is not found in the Septuagint. The fact is, it was a word coined by the evangelists themselves. They did not find one in the whole Greek language that suited their purpose, and therefore they had to make one.

It is expressive of the deepest emotion, a striving of the bowels—a yearning of the innermost nature with pity. As the dictionaries tell us—*Ex intimis visceribus misericordia commoveor*. I suppose that when our Savior looked upon certain sights, those who watched Him closely perceived that His internal agitation was very great, His emotions were very deep, and then His face betrayed it, His eyes gushed like founts with tears, and you saw that His big heart was ready to burst with pity for the sorrow upon which His eyes were gazing. He was moved with compassion. His whole nature was agitated with commiseration for the sufferers before Him.

Now, although this word is not used many times even by the evangelists, yet it may be taken as a clue to the Savior's whole life, and I intend thus to apply it to Him. If you would sum up the whole character of Christ in reference to ourselves, it might be gathered into this one sentence, “He was moved with compassion.” Upon this one point we shall try to insist now, and may God grant that good practical result may come of it.

First, I shall lead your meditations to the great transactions of our Savior's life, secondly, to the special instances in which this expression is used by the evangelists, thirdly, to the forethought which He took on our behalf, and fourthly, to the personal testimony which one's own recollections can furnish.

Let us take a rapid survey of—

I. THE GREAT LIFE OF CHRIST, just touching, as with a swallow's wing, the evidence it bears from the beginning.

Before ever the earth was framed, before the foundations of the everlasting hills were laid, when as yet the stars had not begun their shining, it was known to God that His creature man would sin, that the whole race would fall from its pure original state in the first Adam, the covenant head as well as the common parent of the entire human family, and that in consequence of that one man's disobedience every soul born of his lineage would become a sinner too.

Then, as the Creator knew that His creatures would rebel against Him, He saw that it would become necessary, eventually, to avenge His injured law. Therefore, it was purposed, in the eternal plan, ere the stream of time had commenced its course, or ages had begun to accumulate their voluminous records, that there should be an interposer—one ordained to come and re-head the race, to be a second Adam, a federal Chief, to restore the breach, and repair the mischief of the first Adam, to be a Surety to answer for the sons of men on whom God's love did light, that their sins should be laid upon Him, and that He should save them with an everlasting salvation.

No angel could venture to intrude into those divine counsels and decrees, or to offer himself as the surety and sponsor for that new covenant. Yet there was one—and He none other than JEHOVAH'S self—of whom He said, Let all the angels of God worship Him, the Son, the Well beloved of the Father, of whom it is written in the Word, “When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he set a compass

upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep," then, "I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

He it is of whom the apostle John speaks as the Word who was God, and was in the beginning with God. Was He not moved with compassion when He entered into a covenant with His Father on our behalf, even on the behalf of all His chosen—a covenant in which He was to be the sufferer and they the gainers—in which He was to bear the shame that He might bring them into His own glory? Yes, verily, He was even then moved with compassion, for His delights even then were with the sons of men.

Nor did His compassion peer forth in the prospect of an emergency presently to diminish and disappear as the rebellion took a more active form, and the ruin assumed more palpable proportions. It was no transient feeling. He continued still to pity men.

He saw the fall of man, He marked the subtle serpent's mortal sting, He watched the trail as the slime of the serpent passed over the fair glades of Eden, He observed man in his evil progress, adding sin to sin through generation after generation, fouling every page of history until God's patience had been tried to the uttermost, and then, according as it was written in the volume of the Book that He must appear, Jesus Christ came Himself into this stricken world.

Came how? O, be astonished, ye angels, that ye were witnesses of it, and ye men that ye beheld it. The Infinite came down to earth in the form of an infant, He who spans the heavens and holds the ocean in the hollow of His hand, condescended to hang upon a woman's breast—the King eternal became a little child! Let Bethlehem tell that He had compassion. There was no way of saving us but by stooping to us. To bring earth up to heaven, He must bring heaven down to earth. Therefore, in the incarnation, He had compassion, for He took upon Himself our infirmities, and was made like unto ourselves. Matchless pity, indeed, was this!

Then, while He tarried in *the world, a man among men*, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, He was constantly moved with compassion, for He felt all the griefs of mankind in Himself. He took our sicknesses and carried our sorrows, He proved Himself a true brother, with quick, human sensibilities. A tear brought a tear into His eye, a cry made Him pause to ask what help He could render. So generous was His soul, that He gave all He had for the help of those who had not.

The fox had its hole, and the bird its nest, but He had no dwelling place. Stripped even of His garments, He hung upon the cross to die. Never one so indigent in death as He, without a friend, without even a tomb, except such as a loan could find Him. He gave up all the comforts of life—He gave His life itself, He gave His very self to prove that He was moved with compassion.

Most of all do we see how He was moved with compassion in *His terrible death*. Oft and oft again have I told this story, yet these lips shall be dumb ere they cease to reiterate the old, old tidings. God must punish sin, or else He would relinquish the government of the universe. He could not let iniquity go unchastened without compromising the purity of His administration. Therefore, the law must be honored, justice must be vindicated, righteousness must be upheld, crime must be expiated by suffering.

Who, then, shall endure the penance or make the reparation? Shall the dread sentence fall upon all mankind? How far shall vengeance proceed before equity is satisfied? After what manner shall the sword do homage to the scepter? Must the elect of God be condemned for their sins? No, Jesus is moved with compassion. He steps in, He takes upon Himself the uplifted lash, and His shoulders run with gore, He bares His bosom to the furbished sword, and it smites the Shepherd that the sheep may escape. "He looked, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore, His arm brought salvation." He trod the winepress alone, and "bore, that we might never bear, his Father's righteous ire."

Are you asked what means the crucifixion of a perfect man upon a felon's cross, you may reply, "He was moved with compassion." "He saved others; himself he could not save." He was so moved with compassion, that compassion, as it were, did eat Him up. He could save nothing from the general conflagration, He was utterly consumed with love, and died in the flame of ardent love towards the sons

of men. And after He had died and slept a little while in the grave, He rose again. He has gone into His glory, He is living *at the right hand of the Father*, but this is just as true of Him, "He is moved with compassion."

Is proof wanted? Let faith pass within the veil and let your spirits for a moment stand upon that sea of glass mingled with fire where stand the harpers tuning their never ceasing melodies. What see you there conspicuous in the very midst of heaven but One who looks like a lamb that has been slain, and wears His priesthood still? What is His occupation there in heaven? He has no bloody sacrifice to offer, for He has perfected forever those that were set apart.

That work is done, but what is He doing now? He is pleading for His people, He is their perpetual Advocate, their continual Intercessor, He never rests until they come to their rest, He never holds His peace for them, but pleads the merit of His blood, and will do so till all whom the Father gave Him shall be with Him where He is. Well indeed does our hymn express it—

*"Now, though He reigns exalted high,
His love is still as great;
Well He remembers Calvary,
Nor will His saints forget."*

His tender heart pities all the griefs of His dear people. There is not a pang they have but the Head feels it, feels it for all the members. Still does He look upon their imperfections and their infirmities, yet not with anger, not with loss of patience, but with gentleness and sympathy, "He is moved with compassion."

Having thus briefly sketched the life of Christ, I want you to turn to—

II. THOSE PASSAGES OF THE EVANGELISTS IN WHICH THEY TESTIFY THAT HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION.

You will find one case in Matthew 20:31, "Two blind men sat by the wayside begging, and when they heard that Jesus passed by, they said, 'O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us.'" Jesus stood still, called them, questioned them, and they seem to have had full conviction that He could and would restore their sight, so Jesus had compassion on them, touched their eyes, and immediately they received sight.

Yes, and what a lesson this is for any here present who have a like conviction. Do you believe that Christ can heal you? Do you believe that He is willing to heal you? Then let me assure you that a channel of communication is opened between Him and you, for He is moved with compassion towards you, and already I hear Him command you to come to Him. He is ready to heal you now.

The sad condition of a blind man should always move pity in the breast of the humane, but a glance at these two poor men—I do not know that there was anything strange or uncommon about their appearance—touched the Savior's sensibility. And when He heard them say that they did believe He could heal them, He seemed to perceive that they had inward sight, and to account it a pity that they should not have outward sight too. So at once He put His fingers upon their eyes, and they received the power of seeing.

O soul, if you believe Christ can save you, and if you will now trust in Him to save you, be of good cheer, you are saved, that faith of yours has saved you. The very fact that you believe that Jesus is the Christ, and do rely upon Him, may stand as evidence to you that you are forgiven, that you are saved. There is no let or bar to your full redemption. Go your way and rejoice in your Lord. He has compassion on you.

The next case I shall cite is that of the leper, Mark 1:41. This poor man was covered with a sad and foul disease, when he said to Jesus, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He had full faith in Christ's ability, but he had some doubts as to Christ's willingness. Our Savior looked at him, and though

He might very well have rebuked him that he should doubt His willingness, He merely said, "I will, be thou clean," and straightway he was made whole of that loathsome plague.

If there is in this assembly one grievously defiled or openly disgraced by sin, see you the leprosy upon yourself, and do you say, "I believe He could save me if He would"? Have you some lingering doubt about the Savior's willingness? Yet I beseech you breathe this prayer, "Lord, I believe, I believe Thy power. Help Thou my unbelief which lingers round Thy willingness." Then little as your faith is, it shall save you. Jesus, full of compassion, will pity even your unbelief, and accept what is faith, and forgive what is unbelief. There is a second instance.

The third I will give you is from Mark 5:19. It was the demoniac. There met Christ a man so possessed with a devil as to be mad, and instead of belief in Christ or asking for healing, this spirit within the man compelled him to say, "Will thou torment us before the time?"—and rather to stand against Christ healing him than to ask for it, but Christ was moved with compassion, and He bade the evil spirit come out of the evil man.

Oh! I am so glad of this instance of His being moved with compassion. I do not so much wonder that He has pity on those that believe in Him, neither do I so much marvel that He has pity even on weak faith, but here was a case in which there was no faith, no desire, nor anything that could commend him to our Lord's sympathy. Is there no such case among the crowds gathered together here? You do not know why you have come into this assembly. You scarcely feel at home in this place. Though you have led a very sad life, you do not want to be converted—not you. You almost shun the thought.

Yet it is written, "He will have compassion on whom he will have compassion." Well we have known it in this house, and I hope we shall know it again and again that the Lord has laid violent hands of love upon unprepared souls. They have been smitten down with repentance, renewed in heart, and saved from their sins. Saul of Tarsus had no thought that he should ever be an apostle of Christ, but the Lord stopped the persecutor, and changed him into a preacher, so that ever afterwards he propagated the faith which once he destroyed. May the Lord have compassion on you tonight.

Well may we offer that prayer, for what will be your fate if you die as you are? What will be your doom eternally if you pass out of this world, as soon you must, without being sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and forgiven your iniquities? Jesus knows the terrors of the world to come. He describes the torments of hell. He sees your danger, He warns you, He pities you, He sends His messengers to counsel you, He bids me say to the very chief of sinners, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." "Only return unto me and confess thine iniquity, and I will have mercy upon thee," saith the Lord. May God grant that the compassion of Christ may be seen in your case.

As I turned over the Greek Concordance to find out where this word is repeated again and again, I found one instance in Luke 7:13. It refers to the widow at the gates of Nain. Her son was being carried out—her only son. He was dead, and she was desolate. The widow's only son was to her her sole stay, the succor as well as the solace of her old age. He was dead and laid upon the bier, and when Jesus saw the disconsolate mother, He was moved with compassion, and He restored her son.

Oh! is there not refreshment here for you mothers that are weeping for your boys, you that have ungodly sons, unconverted daughters, the Lord Jesus sees your tears. You weep alone sometimes, and when you are sitting and enjoying the Word, you think, "Oh! that my Absalom were renewed, oh! that Ishmael might live before thee." Jesus knows about it. He was always tender to His own mother, and He will be so to you. And you that are mourning over those that have been lately taken from you, Jesus pities you. Jesus wept, He sympathizes with your tears. He will dry them and give you consolation. "He was moved with compassion."

Still the occasions on which we find this expression most frequently used in the evangelists are when crowds of people were assembled. At the sight of the great congregations that gathered to hear Him, our Lord was often moved with compassion. Sometimes it was because they were hungry and faint, and in the fullness of His sympathy He multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed them. At the same time He showed His disciples that it is a good work to feed the poor. He would not have them so spiritually

minded as to forget that the poor have flesh and blood that require sustenance, and they need to eat and to drink, to be housed and clothed, the Christian's charity must not lie in words only, but in deeds.

Our Lord was moved with compassion, it is said, when He saw the number of sick people in the throng, for they made a hospital of His preaching place. Wherever He paused or even passed by, they laid the sick in the streets, He could not stand or walk without the spectacle of their pallets to harrow His feelings. And He healed their impotent folk, as if to show that the Christian does well to minister to the sick—that the patient watcher by the bedside may be serving the Lord, and following His example, as well as the most diligent teacher or the most earnest preacher of the glorious Gospel.

All means that can be used to mitigate human suffering are Christlike, and they ought to be carried out in His name, and carried to the utmost perfection possible. Christ is the patron of the hospital, He is the President of all places where men's bodies are cared for.

But we are also told that the multitude excited His compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So He taught them as a guide that showed the path by leading the way, and He looked after their welfare as a Shepherd who regarded the health of their bodies as well as the good estate of their souls.

Surely, brethren and sisters, if you love Him, and wish to be like Him, you cannot look on this congregation without pity. You cannot go out into the streets of London and stand in the high roads among the surging masses for half an hour without saying, "Whither away these souls? Which road are they travelling? Will they all meet in heaven?" What! live you in London, move you about in this great metropolis, and do you never have the heartache, never feel your soul ready to burst with pity? Then shame on you! Ask yourself whether you have the spirit of Christ at all.

In this congregation, were we all moved with pity as we should be, I should not have to complain, as I sometimes must, that persons come in and out of here in want of someone to speak with them, to condole, to console, or to commune with them in their loneliness, and they find no helper. Time was when such a thing never occurred, but in conversing with inquirers lately, I have met with several cases in which persons in a distressed state of mind have said that they would have given anything for half an hour's conversation with any Christian to whom they might have opened their hearts.

They came from the country, attended the Tabernacle, and no one spoke to them. I am sorry it should be so. You used to watch for souls, most of you. Very careful were you to speak to those whom you saw again and again. I do pray you mend that matter. If you have any bowels of mercy, you should be looking out for opportunities to do good. Oh! never let a poor wounded soul faint for want of the balm. You know the balm. It has healed yourselves. Use it wherever the arrows of God have smitten a soul.

Enough, I must leave this point, I have given you, I think, every case in which it is said that Jesus was moved with compassion.

Very briefly let me notice—

III. SOME OF THE FORESIGHTS OF HIS COMPASSION.

The Lord has gone from us, but as He knew what would happen while He was away, He has, with blessed forethought, provided for our wants. Well He knew that we should never be able to preserve the truth pure by tradition. That is a stream that always muddies and defiles everything. So in tender forethought He has given us the consolidated testimony, *the unchangeable truth in His own Book*, for He was moved with compassion.

He knew the priests would not preach the Gospel, He knew that no order of men could be trusted to hold fast sound doctrine from generation to generation, He knew there would be hirelings that dare not be faithful to their conscience lest they should lose their pay, while there would be others who love to tickle men's ears and flatter their vanity rather than to tell plainly and distinctly the whole counsel of God. Therefore, He has put it here, so that if you live where there is no preacher of the Gospel, you have the old Book to go to. He is moved with compassion for you. For where a man cannot go, the Book can go, and where in silence no voice is heard, the still clear voice of this blessed Book can reach the heart.

Because He knew the people would require this sacred teaching, and could not have it otherwise, He was moved with compassion towards us all, and gave us the blessed Book of inspired God-breathed Scripture.

But then, since He knew that some would not read the Bible, and others might read and not understand it, He has sent His ministers forth to do *the work of evangelists*. He raises up men, saved themselves from great sin, trophies of redeeming grace, who feel a sympathy with their fellow men who are reveling in sin, reckless of their danger.

These servants of His, the Lord enables to preach His truth, some with more, some with less ability than others, still, there are, thank God, throughout this happy realm, and in other favored lands, men everywhere, who, because sinners will not come to Christ of themselves, go after them and persuade them, plead with them, and entreat them to believe and turn to the Lord. This comes of Christ's tender gentleness. He was moved with compassion, and therefore He sent His servants to call sinners to repentance.

But since the minister, though He may call as he may, will not bring souls to Christ of himself, the Lord Jesus, moved with compassion, has *sent His Spirit*. The Holy Ghost is here. We have not to say—

“Come Holy Spirit, heavenly dove.”

He is here. He dwells in His church and He moves over the congregation, and He touches men's hearts, and He subtly inclines them to believe in Christ. Oh! this is great mercy when a Prince spreads a feast and gives an invitation. That is all you can expect him to do. But if he keeps a host of footmen and says, "Go and fetch them one by one till they do come," that is more gracious still. But if He goes Himself and with sacred violence compels them to come in—oh! this is more than we could have thought He would have done, but He is moved with compassion, and He does that.

Furthermore, brethren, the Lord Jesus knew that after we were saved from the damning power of sin, we should always be full of wants, and therefore He was moved with compassion, and He sets up *the throne of grace*, the mercy seat, to which we may always come, and from which we may always obtain grace to help in time of need. Helped by His Spirit, we can bring what petitions we will, and they shall be heard. And then, since He knew we could not pray as we ought, He was moved with compassion when He sent the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities, to teach us how to pray.

Now I do not know a single infirmity that I have or that you have, my Christian brother, but what Christ Jesus has been moved with compassion about it, and has provided for it. He has not left one single weak point of which we have to say, "There I shall fail, because He will not help there," but He has looked us over and over from head to foot, and said, "You will have an infirmity there, I will provide for it. You will have a weakness there, I will provide for it."

And oh! how *His promises meet every case!* Did you ever get into a corner where there was not a promise in the corner too? Had you ever to pass through a river but there was a promise about His being in the river with you? Were you ever on the sick bed without a promise like this, "I will make thy bed in thy sickness"? In the midst of pestilence have you not found a promise that "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust"? The Lord's great compassion has met the wants of all His servants to the end.

If our children should ever need as much patience to be exercised towards them as Christ needs to exercise towards us, I am sure there would be none of us able to bear the house. They have their infirmities, and they full often vex and grieve us, it may be, but oh! we ought to have much compassion for the infirmities of our children—ay, and of our brethren and sisters, and neighbors—for what compassion has the Lord had with us? I do believe none but God could bear with such untoward children as we ourselves are. He sees our faults, you know, when we do not see them, and He knows what those faults are more thoroughly than we do. Yet still He never smites in anger. He cuts us not off, but He still continues to show us abounding mercies.

Oh! what a guardian Savior is the Lord Jesus Christ to us, and how we ought to bless His name at all times, and how His praise should be continually in our mouth. One thought strikes me that I must put in here, He knew that we should be very forgetful, and He was moved with compassion with our forgetfulness when He instituted the blessed supper, and we can sit around the table and break bread, and pour forth the wine in remembrance of Him. Surely this is another instance of how He is moved with compassion, and not with indignation, towards our weaknesses.

And now let me close with—

IV. PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST.

I shall only recall my own experience in order to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, my brethren and sisters. I do well remember when I was *under conviction of sin*, and smarted bitterly under the rod of God, that when I was most heavy and depressed there would sometimes come something like hope across my spirit. I knew what it was to say, “My soul chooseth strangling rather than life,” yet when I was at the lowest ebb and most ready to despair, though I could not quite lay hold of Christ, I used to get a touch of the promise now and then, till I half hoped that, after all, I might prove to be God’s prisoner, and He might yet set me free.

I do remember well, when my sins compassed me about like bees, and I thought it was all over with me, and I must be destroyed by them, it was at that moment when Jesus revealed Himself to me. Had He waited a little longer, I had died of despair, but that was no desire of His. On swift wings of love He came and manifested His dear wounded self to my heart. I looked to Him and was lightened, and my peace flowed like a river. I rejoiced in Him.

Yes, He was moved with compassion. He would not let the pangs of conviction be too severe, neither would He suffer them to be protracted too long for the spirit of man to fail before Him. It is not His wont to break a leaf that is driven by the tempest. “He will not quench the smoking flax.” Yes, and I do remember since I first saw Him and began to love Him many *sharp and severe troubles*, dark and heavy trials, yet have I noted this, that they have never reached that pitch of severity which I was unable to bear.

When all gates seemed closed, there has still been with the trial a way of escape, and I have noted again that in deeper depressions of spirits through which I have passed, and horrible despondencies that have crushed me down, I have had some gleams of love, and hope, and faith at the last moment, for He was moved with compassion. If He withdrew His face, it was only till my heart broke for Him, and then He showed me the light of His countenance again. If He laid the rod upon me, yet when my soul cried under His chastening He could not bear it, but He put back the rod, and He said, “My child, I will comfort thee.”

Oh! the comforts that He gives on a sick bed! Oh! the consolations of Christ! when you are very low. If there is anything dainty to the taste in the Word of God, you get it then, if there be any bowels of mercy, you hear them sounding for you then. When you are in the saddest plight, Christ comes to your aid with the sweetest manifestations, for He is moved with compassion.

How frequently have I noticed, and I tell it to His praise, for though it shows my weakness, it proves His compassion, that sometimes, after preaching the Gospel, I have been so filled with self-reproach, that I could hardly sleep through the night because I had not preached as I desired. I have sat me down and cried over some sermons, as though I knew that I had missed the mark and lost the opportunity. Not once nor twice, but many a time has it happened, that within a few days someone has come to tell me that he or she found the Lord through that very sermon, the shortcoming of which I had deplored.

Glory be to Jesus, it was His gentleness that did it. He did not want His servant to be too much bowed down with a sense of infirmity, and so He had compassion on him and comforted him. Have not you noticed, some of you, that after doing your best to serve the Lord, when somebody has sneered at you, or you have met with such a rebuff as made you half inclined to give up the work, an unexpected success has been given you, so that you have not played the Jonah and ran away to Tarshish, but kept to

your work? Ah! how many times in your life, if you could read it all, you would have to stop and write between the lines, "He was moved with compassion."

Many and many a time, when no other compassion could help, when all the sympathy of friends would be unavailing, He has been moved with compassion towards us, has said to us, "Be of good cheer," banished our fears with the magic of His voice, and filled our souls to overflowing with gratitude. When we have been misrepresented, traduced, and slandered, we have found in the sympathy of Christ our richest support, till we could sing with rapture the verse—I cannot help quoting it now, though I have often quoted it before—

*"If on my face for Thy dear name,
Shame and reproach shall be,
I'll hail reproach and welcome shame,
Since Thou rememberest me."*

The compassion of the Master making up for all the abuses of His enemies. And believe me, there is nothing sweeter to a forlorn and broken spirit than the fact that Jesus has compassion. Are any of you sad and lonely? Have any of you been cruelly wronged? Have you lost the goodwill of some you esteemed? Do you seem as if you had the cold shoulder even from good people? Do not say, in the anguish of your spirit, "I am lost," and give up. He has compassion on you.

Nay, poor fallen woman, seek not the dark river and the cold stream—He has compassion. He who looks down with the bright eyes of yonder stars and watches you is your friend. He yet can help you. Though you have gone so far from the path of virtue, throw not yourself away in blank despair, for He has compassion.

And you, broken down in health and broken down in fortune, scarcely with shoes for your feet, you are welcome in the house of God, welcome as the most honored guest in the assembly of the saints. Let not the weighty grief that hangs over your soul tempt you to think that hopeless darkness have settled your fate and foreclosed your doom. Though your sin may have beggared you, Christ can enrich you with better riches. He has compassion.

"Ah!" say you, "they will pass me on the stairs, they will give me a broad pathway, and if they see me in the street they will not speak to me—even His disciples will not." Be it so, but better than His disciples, tenderer by far, is Jesus. Is there a man here, whom to associate with were a scandal from which the pure and pious would shrink? The holy, harmless, undefiled One will not disdain even him—for this man receiveth sinners—He is a friend of publicans and sinners.

He is never happier than when He is relieving and retrieving the forlorn, the abject, and the outcast. He despises not any that confess their sins and seek His mercy. No pride nestles in His dear heart, no sarcastic word rolls off His gracious tongue, no bitter expression falls from His blessed lips. He still receives the guilty.

Pray to Him now. Now let the silent prayer go up, "My Savior, have pity upon me, be moved with compassion towards me, for if misery is any qualification for mercy, I am a fit object for Thy compassion. Oh! save me for Thy mercy's sake!" Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

MATTHEW 9:27-38

Verses 27-28. *And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he was come into the house,—*

I suppose the house at Capernaum, where he was wont to stay.

28. *The blind men came to him:*

Forced their way in. They must be attended to. Hunger breaks through stone walls, they say, and an earnest heart will follow after what it seeks.

28-29. *And Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.*

That is, "If you do not believe, you shall not see, but if there be faith in you, behold you shall have sight."

30-32. *And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country. As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.*

Here we have had the dead, those that were bleeding to death, the blind, and the dumb, and the possessed of a devil.

33. *And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, it was never so seen in Israel.*

No, but Jesus does wonders. Something off the common, and altogether out of the ordinary way, His work of grace must be.

34. *But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.*

There is always somebody or other who has got an ugly word to put in. It matters not how much God may bless the Gospel, there is no stopping the sneers and objections, but the mercy is that it does not matter much. Our Lord was not hurt, and the work went on, notwithstanding all the caviling of the Pharisees.

35. *And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*

That was the answer to the Pharisees. Christian activity, fervent devotion to the cause of God, is the best answer that can be given to cavilers of any sort or every sort. In your work hold on, my brother, and those who cavil at you now may come to honor you one of these days.

36-37. *But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;*

We are all loiterers, but where are the labourers? Where are they with the sharp sickle that can cut down the wheat, and with a ready hand, can bind it, and with a strong shoulder, carry it? Alas! in this great city, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few!

38. *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

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